



LOUISIANA STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE



■ PROJECT OVERVIEW

In the summer of 2000, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) and a consultant team led by Wilbur Smith Associates embarked together on the 3 year task of updating the state's transportation plan. The purpose of the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update* is to develop a statewide transportation policy and planning framework, which will help achieve the plan's goals and objectives and guide public investment in Louisiana over the next 30 years. The plan is addressing all modes of transportation including highways, aviation, railroads, trucking, ports and waterways, surface passenger transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian.

Numerous public outreach activities have occurred as part of the plan development process to involve the public and key agencies and stakeholders in updating the

Statewide Transportation Plan. Public involvement activities that have occurred thus far include meetings with the various transportation Advisory Councils, which are helping guide the process of updating the *Statewide Transportation Plan*. Additionally, a Statewide Conference was held in July/August, 2000 with the purpose of introducing stakeholders to the *Plan Update* and seeking input on major transportation issues throughout the state.



LDOTD OFFICIALS

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Ken Perret
Assistant Secretary

■ VALUES, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Values, goals and objectives were developed to guide the update of the *Statewide Transportation Plan*. The goals and objectives are modifications of those presented in the state's first long-range transportation plan adopted in 1996. Goals and objectives were revised based on input received from the Statewide Conference held in July/August 2000, the first series of plan update meetings with the Advisory

Councils, the planning requirements from the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21), and review by DOTD and consultant staff. Revised goals and objectives were adopted at the second Louisiana Investment in Infrastructure for Economic Prosperity (LIIEP) Commission meeting held in March, 2002.



Advisory Council Chairs:

Regional Planning Officials

Mr. Kenneth A. Perret
Assistant Secretary
Office of Planning &
Programming
LDOTD

Trucking

Mr. Glen Guillot
President
Louisiana Motor Transport
Association

Aviation

Mr. Roy Miller
Director
Shreveport Regional Airport

Rail

Mr. Carmack M. Blackmon
General Counsel and Legislative
Representative
Louisiana Railroads

Ports & Waterways

Ms. Sherri McConnell
Executive Director
Ports Association of Louisiana

Surface Passenger Transportation

Mr. Patrick Judge
President
Louisiana Public Transit Association

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

Mr. Tony Trammel
Director
Traffic and Transportation
Department
Lafayette Consolidated
Government

Intermodal

Mr. F. E. "Hank" Lauricella
General Partner
Lauricella Land Company

■ ADVISORY COUNCILS

Eight transportation Advisory Councils (Intelligent Transportation Systems, Intermodal, Aviation, Ports & Waterways, Rail, Surface Passenger Transportation, Regional Planning Officials and Trucking) were reactivated for the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update* to allow a more focused evaluation of modal activities and specialized exchange of ideas. Advisory councils consist of 20 to 30 members and include major stakeholders from key agencies and the private sector. Four meetings with the Advisory Councils will be held throughout the course of this study, with the purpose of seeking input and building consensus

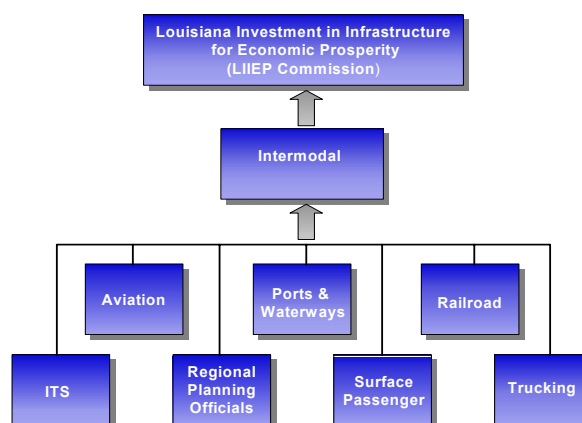
on facilities, services, policies and regulations for the various modes of transportation. The first round of Advisory Council meetings was held in April, 2001. The purpose of these meetings was to provide Advisory Council members with an overview of the *Plan Update* and to discuss issues and suggested changes to the overall goals and objectives. The second round of Advisory Council meetings was held in March/April, 2002. The purpose of the second round of meetings was to update members on the current status of the plan and discuss issues pertinent to each mode.

■ LIIEP COMMISSION

Created by the Louisiana Legislature, the Louisiana Investment in Infrastructure for Economic Prosperity (LIIEP) Commission is serving as a policy committee for the update of the *Statewide Transportation Plan*. The role of the LIIEP Commission is to serve as the advocate for transportation infrastructure and services critical to economic growth in Louisiana and to oversee and guide the implementation of

the plan. The first LIIEP Commission meeting was held on February 5, 2002 with the purpose of discussing the LIIEP Commission's role in the statewide plan and reviewing the revised goals and objectives. The second meeting was held on March 4, 2002 with the purpose of reviewing the state's budget and funding sources for infrastructure improvements.

Relationship of Advisory Councils



The seven modal Advisory Councils report to the Intermodal Advisory Council, who is responsible for the overall review of each element and for identifying financing issues related to the funding of infrastructure improvements. The Intermodal Council reports to the LIIEP Commission who will oversee and guide the implementation of the updated Plan.

■ MODAL UPDATES

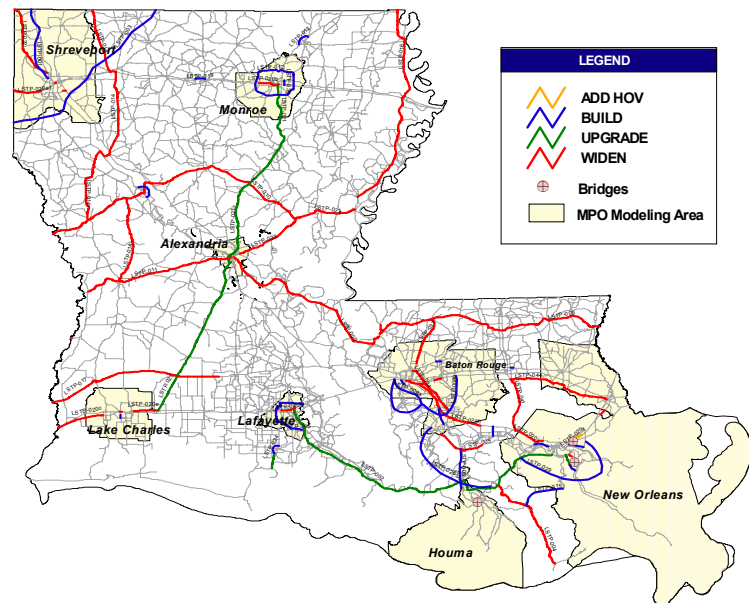
Highways

Between February and April, 2002, a total of six Regional Planning Officials (RPO) Advisory Council meetings were held to allow proponents/sponsors of large scale highway improvements (“megaprojects”) to present the statewide impacts and benefits of their projects, as well as justification of why they should be included in the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update*. A total of 63 such projects have been identified and include the widening of portions of Interstates 10, 20 and 12; widening of portions of US Highways 61, 65, 84 and 190; construction of I-49 and I-69; and other highway improvements throughout the state.

Traffic impacts of these highway improvements will be evaluated using the statewide travel demand model being developed as part of this *Plan Update*. Additionally, evaluation of the proposed highway improvements will consider LDOTD’s highway and bridge needs programs and a qualitative evaluation being performed by the consultant team and LDOTD, which

evaluated the projects based on the following major criteria: Transportation Economics, Economic Development, Environment, and Safety.

Louisiana “Megaprojects”



Statewide Highway Travel Demand Model

The Statewide Travel Demand Model element of the Statewide Transportation Plan Update is nearing completion. The development stages of this task have included three successful model design workshops in which both members of the consultant team and the LDOTD model development steering committee discussed and resolved statewide modeling issues and options. Since the workshops, the consultant team has been working to complete this complex and challenging task of developing and calibrating a statewide transportation model.

The consultant team has completed the development of the travel demand model using TransCAD transportation planning software by Caliper Corporation. An interactive system for updating roadway characteristics from the State's Surface Type Log and Highway Needs Inventory within the GIS environment has been developed for future use of the model by LDOTD planning staff. This will allow LDOTD planners to use the model to analyze transportation alternatives even after changes and improvements have been made to the existing highway network.

Aviation

The first five of the seven elements of the separate *Louisiana Airport System Plan* are in draft form and are under review by LDOTD Aviation Division staff as well as the Aviation Advisory Council. These elements include the following:

- ◆ Performance criteria and benchmarks
- ◆ Inventory
- ◆ Trends
- ◆ Forecasts
- ◆ Adequacy and deficiency analysis
- ◆ Identify/review options
- ◆ Recommended plan

Airport Locations



The next step is to identify and review options available to LDOTD Aviation Division staff to improve the airport system in the state. Deficiencies in the airport system will be addressed and ways to correct them will be presented. At the conclusion of the study, a recommended plan will provide guidelines to implementing these changes. Issues typically addressed in the recommendations include runway length, taxiway design, navigational aids, runway lighting, aircraft storage, and other airport facility issues.

Rail

The purpose of the separate *Louisiana State Rail Plan* is to describe the state's rail system, the use of that system, the key issues in rail transportation, the needs of short lines, and potential corridors for passenger rail service. The plan's survey of Louisiana short lines and terminal railroads identified unmet capital needs totaling \$103 million. Shippers reported rail bottlenecks in New Orleans, Shreveport and Baton Rouge that delay their traffic. Also, the plan's analysis indicated that there is sizable personal travel occurring in several corridors across the state that could potentially become viable passenger corridors.

The draft *Rail Plan* has been completed and includes numerous recommendations. One was to staff the LDOTD Rail Division appropriately to handle the numerous tasks it is called upon to do. (At

the present time the Division has one employee.) Another was to expand the Freight Rail Advisory Council to advise and guide state rail policy on a continuing basis. A third recommendation was to establish state funding to help cover the unfunded capital needs of the state's short lines and terminal railroads. Two others were to continue the study of potential passenger rail corridors, and to provide additional funding for LDOTD's Highway-Rail At-Grade Crossing Improvement Program.



Trucking

The examination of characteristics associated with the transportation of freight in Louisiana makes up a major component of the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update*. Several transport modes account for some share of the freight moved into, out of, or through the state. However, trucks traveling on Louisiana roadways are the dominant carrier of domestic and international freight, accounting for the majority (53%, or 527 million tons) of total tonnage moved. This represents almost double the tonnage carried by the next highest mode - water transport (28% or 281 million tons).

In addition to providing an overview of the trucking environment in Louisiana (weight and size considerations, rest stop availability, designated truck route loca-

tions), state-specific trucking issues are being examined in the *Plan Update*. These include the impact of opening the U.S. border to Mexican trucks on Louisiana roadways and traveling public, as well as the effect on the state's highway network of exempting sugarcane-hauling heavy trucks from weight limit requirements.

A detailed analysis of freight movements by truck is conducted as part of the *Plan Update*. Tonnages of inbound, outbound, intrastate and through movements, by commodity type, make up part of this analysis. Additionally, the origin and destination locations for these movements are identified.



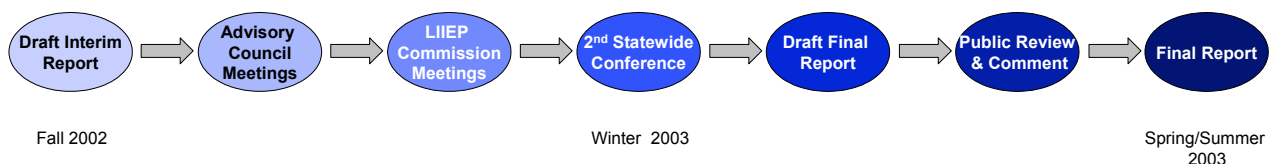
Ports & Waterways

UNO National Ports and Waterways Institute has completed evaluation of the existing maritime transportation infrastructure in Louisiana. A preliminary assessment of maritime infrastructure capacity needs to accommodate projected cargo volumes has been conducted. A variety of measures necessary to increase the competitiveness of this industry have been identified. It has been concluded that significant efforts must be initiated to increase the efficiency of the existing facilities and improve their responsiveness to customers' needs. The Institute has also completed a review of safety issues related to the Louisiana maritime industry. An assessment of the state ports and water-

ways related marketing efforts has been completed. An impact of federal funding and navigation projects on the Louisiana maritime sector has also been completed. Recommendations on the federal government involvement in maintaining and increasing capacities of the Louisiana waterways as a critical element of the national transportation system have been developed, and the related funding needs have been identified.

Current efforts are focused on developing final recommendations on priorities and funding necessary for further expansion and enhancement of Louisiana ports and waterways.

Remaining Schedule





Freight Analysis

An analysis of freight movement over Louisiana's transportation systems is currently being prepared. The freight evaluation will include an analysis of freight flows into, out of, and within Louisiana, including forecasts to the year 2030.

This freight flow analysis will describe:

- ◆ Louisiana's trading partners
- ◆ The types of commodities
- ◆ The preferred modes of travel
- ◆ Growth in freight traffic in Louisiana

Issues, constraints, and opportunities regarding the way freight moves in Louisiana will be documented in the Plan report, and will also include:

- ◆ An overview of Louisiana freight flows
- ◆ Geographical analysis of Louisiana freight
 - Internal freight flows (within LA)
 - External freight flows
- ◆ Modal analysis of Louisiana freight
 - Truck
 - Rail
 - Water
 - Air
- ◆ Commodity Analysis of Louisiana freight
- ◆ Freight forecasts for 2030
- ◆ Data sources

Surface Passenger Transportation

The Surface Passenger element of the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update* addresses passenger rail, local transit systems and intercity bus provided by the private sector in Louisiana. LDOTD is working both with users and providers of the existing surface passenger transportation system to develop a comprehensive and equitable transportation service delivery network that addresses this important component of the state's overall transportation infrastructure. Issues regarding the reauthorization of TEA-21 next year are also being addressed in this element.



Currently the state is served by three long distance Amtrak trains, centered around New Orleans. The funding of Amtrak is currently a hot topic; Amtrak has stated that if it does not receive a \$1.2 B investment into the system it will suspend portions of, if not all of the national system effective October 2002.

Transit systems in the state include urban, rural and specialized systems. Urban systems include fixed route, bus, streetcar (Orleans Parish only), and demand response services. There are four private intercity motorcoach carriers, which operate fixed route intercity operations: Greyhound Lines Inc., Delta Bus Lines, Inc., Kerrville Bus Company, Inc. and Flag Enterprises Inc. Among these four companies service is provided to 71 terminals located throughout the state. Improvement of the connectivity between private and public providers is one of the issues which needs to be addressed in the future.

Bicycle/Pedestrian

LDOTD recognizes the importance of providing for adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the statewide transportation planning process. In 1998, the *Louisiana Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* was completed. The Plan provides comprehensive analysis of non-motorized travel in Louisiana through:

- ◆ Specification of goals, objectives, performance measures and critical success factors.
- ◆ Providing detailed planning and design guidelines for the bicycle and pedestrian modes.
- ◆ Development of an implementation plan that markets bicycle and pedestrian travel through promotional and public education campaigns. Certain enforcement activities are also described.

Supplementing these efforts, the *Plan Update* will make the following recommendations concerning bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure:

- ◆ LDOTD should recognize and formalize the circumstances in which bicycle and pedestrian facilities will not be required in all transportation projects.
- ◆ LDOTD should develop and adopt new typical highway and street sections that incorporate the designs presented for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- ◆ Initiation of an intensive re-tooling of LDOTD planning functions whereby all transportation planners and engineers are made conversant with the new information required to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

ITS

LDOTD has a well-established process for planning and implementing ITS improvements. Beginning with the ITS/CVO Business Plan in 1998, and then the ITS Business Plan in 2000, LDOTD has developed goals for the state ITS infrastructure that will serve as the foundation for measuring the benefits that it can provide:

- ◆ Improve overall safety of the transportation network
- ◆ Improve traffic management
- ◆ Reduce non-recurring delays
- ◆ Effectively disseminate traffic information to the public
- ◆ Improve emergency management
- ◆ Promote more efficient modal utilization
- ◆ Improve administrative efficiency, safety and productivity of commercial vehicle operations (CVO)

With this last goal in mind, LDOTD developed the Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) plan, which was adopted in December, 2001. The plan commits LDOTD to achieve CVISN Level 1 deployment by September 30, 2003. Level 1 projects include:

- ◆ Automated safety assurance
- ◆ Automated credentialing
- ◆ Electronic screening

Post Level 1 projects will include automated oversize/overweight permitting and automated accident reporting.

It is anticipated that ITS improvements to Louisiana's transportation infrastructure will significantly improve Louisiana's competitive position as a national gateway for commerce and goods movement.

Second Statewide Conference

As part of the extensive public involvement efforts for this Plan Update, LDOTD will be holding a second statewide conference in early 2003. The purpose of this conference will be to present the draft *Statewide Transportation Plan Update* to stakeholders and gain support and consensus on its recommendations. Input and comments received at this conference will be incorporated into the final report.



■ Get Involved!

LDOTD welcomes your comments and encourages you to follow the development of the *Statewide Transportation Plan Update*. Involvement of the general public, as well as public agencies, is key to the successful update of the Plan that defines the future of transportation in Louisiana.

- ◆ Visit our project website at www.lastateplan.org or access it through the LDOTD's website at www.dotd.state.la.us
- ◆ Look forward to our upcoming newsletters
- ◆ To offer comments, or be added to the project mailing list, write us at the following address:

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